



Police Department

April 1, 2021

April is national Distracted Driving Awareness Month. Every year, thousands of people lose their lives in distracted-driving accidents. In this month's edition, I'd like to discuss the dangers of distracted driving and what the community can do to help prevent it.

Did you know...

- Distracted driving is driving while doing another activity that takes your attention away from driving.
- On a typical day, more than 700 people are injured in distracted driving accidents.
- In 2019, over 3,000 people were killed in distracted driving accidents, a 10% increase from 2018.
- In 2019, distracted driving was a reported factor in 8.5% of fatal motor vehicle crashes.

(Source: National Safety Council/National Highway Traffic Safety Administration/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Types of Distractions

Drivers should be aware of three major types of distraction: visual (eyes), manual (hands), and cognitive (mind). Whether it be texting, taking photos, setting your navigation, adjusting the radio, drinking coffee, or applying your makeup—driving while distracted can be dangerous as you may be robbing yourself of seconds that you may need to avoid a close call or deadly crash. Most drivers are aware of the dangers of being visually or manually distracted while driving; however, people typically do not realize when they are cognitively distracted such as talking on the phone while using a hands-free device. Contrary to the popular belief, hands-free devices are not risk-free; they still create a cognitive distraction as the driver mentally engages with interactive tasks such as talking, which results in a loss of the mental focus required to drive safely.

How to Prevent Distracted Driving

- **For drivers:** do not multitask while driving. Drivers should make driving the primary focus and perform other visually, manually, and cognitively demanding tasks only when safely parked.
- **For passengers:** speak up when your driver is driving while distracted and ask them to focus on the road. Reduce distractions for the driver by assisting with navigation or other tasks.
- **For parents:** research suggests that younger drivers (16-24) are more likely to use handheld electronic devices while driving compared to older drivers. Educate your teen or young adult drivers about the rules and responsibilities involved in driving. Emphasize that texts and phone calls can wait until they've arrived at a destination.

The Traffic Collisions Dashboard

CVPD utilizes a series of data dashboards that can be used to track a variety of public safety metrics to provide greater transparency, build trust, and enhance community engagement. The Traffic Collisions Dashboard features information about the traffic accidents within the city such as accident types, time of day, and distribution by council district. To view the traffic collisions dashboard, click here: <https://www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/police-department/services/dashboard/special-studies>

Please let us know if there are specific public safety issues you would like us to evaluate in the future, or specific topics about which you would like more information. You can share your thoughts by contacting our Community Outreach team at (619) 691-5187 or by visiting our website at <https://www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/police-department/contact-us>.

Thank you in advance for your assistance,

Roxana Kennedy, Chief of Police